

1466.9

EDMAR AND ELWINNA:

OR,

THE WOER-WARLOCK.

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THE WORKMAN

OF

THE WORKMAN

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THE WOER-WARLOCK.

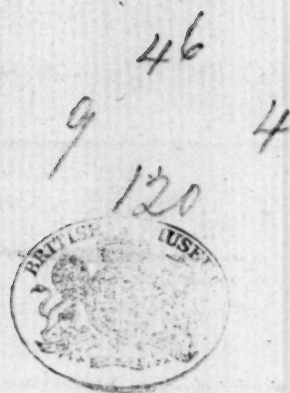
AN OLD BALLAD,

BUT NEVER BEFORE PUBLISHED.

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ADVERTISEMENT

BY THE

E D I T O R.

THE manuscript of the following ballad was, along with some other old pieces, both in verse and prose, written by the same author, put into my hands by my grandfather two or three years ago. Not that the old gentleman (who is since dead) had any thought of publishing them: He was a man that, while he cared more for the antiquity of his family than for poetry, prized also golden more than literary treasure, and perhaps had never looked into them. Their age gave them all their value to him. He had been informed that I, who was his favourite, made verses; and, having sent for
me

me one day, he advised me to give over so idle and dangerous a practice, as he called it ; but concluded his advice with telling me, that, if I liked metre, he would show me something curious in it. Away he went, and returned with the old pieces I have mentioned. They were written, he said, by an ancestor of the family, who was a schoolmaster, and lived, he was sure, several generations ago, but how many he could not tell.

THE only piece among them, that seemed to be worth printing, was the ballad now presented to the public. But its language was so old, that it would have been to by far the greatest part of readers as if written in a foreign tongue : Its style, too was uncouth. I, therefore, thought, though perhaps some antiquaries will think otherwise, that it would be doing but justice to the poem ;—and what the author himself, could the old carle have risen from his cold couch after a sleep of two or three centuries to be
his

his own editor, would have done,—to modernize it, (still, however preserving its character), and so render it not only intelligible to all, but to the generality more pleasing. Thus I thought, and I have acted accordingly. Yet, though, I confess, I have made free with the MS. in changing the old spelling to the modern, in substituting English words for Scottish ones, which were now so obsolete that they would have hurt the reading, in altering expressions, that were pedantic or had too much of the rude boldness of “other days,” in smoothing rugged lines, and in making rhymes more exact, I have meddled with none of the sentiments. The ballad’s character is still entire, and its antiquity still very evident.

EDMAR AND ELWINNA:

OR,

THE WOOPER-WARLOCK.

IV.

FAST by the rill, that seem'd to talk,

('Twas merry May's sweet time,)

Listening she stood, in beauty's best,

Stood, like all round, in prime,

II.

O, sure she is a maid so fair,

Her fairer swain ne'er woo'd;

And blithe is she, to smiling giv'n,

But what is better, good;

A

III.

III.

For never yet could she think ill,

Mild as the nun and true.

Her form is of the figure *jimp* *.

Her eyes they are so blue!

IV.

I'll tell she is so noble' a dame,

(Nor tell I it through pride,)

'Twould much beseem, ay, our Scotch king †

To fit by her fair side.

V.

And *east* ‡ she looks, and *west* § she looks,

And to the north and south,

Now

* *Jimp figure* is slender make.

† One of our Jameses without doubt, but which of them I have no authority to say.

‡ Eastward.

§ Westward.

THE WOOER-WARLOCK.

Now whom, deem ye, should she look for
But Edmar, happy youth?

VI.

Full much she feels within her heart,
Full much she thinks in mind,
But short while turn her cares all day
From Edmar good and kind.

VII.

And this, wot ye, is Venus' eve*,
The prime of eves to love;
Hearts are both sooner fix'd its tide,
And fix'd, they ne'er more move.

VIII.

Now why comes not my true-love? why?
He *trysted*† me 'gainst eve
To meet him on this green-grass bank,
To hear love, and believe.

IX.

* Friday eve.

† Made an appointment with. This is not just the exact meaning of *trysted* here, but I cannot well find words to explain it better.

IX.

Yet sure, by my proud side, ere long
 Shall he those troutlings view,
 If heaven forbid all harm to come,
 For aye his lips were true.

X.

With this her anxious eyes look round,
 (And they are twins star-born,)
 Look up the *haugh*, * look down the haugh,
 Which hazel trees adorn.

XI.

A native fear that dwells in them
 Prays aye, (and wins th'implore,)
Good Powers! guard me, for I'm self-weak!
 But now this three times o'er,

XII.

* A *haugh* is a low piece of ground on the banks of a stream.

XII.

And at each *foughing** of the leaf
 She turns, and thinks to spy
 The coming of her bonny *joe*†:
 And aye is heav'd the figh.

XIII.

Long, long she waits, and fore she longs,
 Yet cannot wifh's power
 Find of her love more than when first
 She came, before the hour.

XIV.

When lo! with reverend step, full flow
 Descends the haugh a wight

B

OF

* A *fough* is a soft found; to *fough* is to found softly, &c. But indeed *fough* conveys an idea through Scottish ears, which to express in words is difficult. It is pronounced by the more polished swains as if written *souff*.

† Sweetheart, friend, &c.

Of ancient form.—Now, ween ye, who
Comes on her boding fight?

XV.

Bent down, like withered branch, he comes :
A staff stays up each hand.
His coat and gloves are of the *gray**
Weav'd in the fair Mers-land.

XVI.

And girds his loins a leathern zone,
(Its buckle-band is spy'd) ;
While coal-black is his bonnet broad,
No ribbands give it pride.

XVII.

And O, full long and snowy too,
The sign of eighty years,

Waves

* Coarse cloth, called so from its colour ; and also *natural gray*, from its being made of white wool mixed with black, not dyed by the hands of man, but of *Nature*, or the produce of the black sheep.

Waves down his beard! The warlock-wight
Ah! much Elwinna fears!

XVIII.

Now Christ be with me! thrice she prays,
'Tis Glorloz of the *knoww**!
And thrice is cross'd her bosom white,
And thrice is cross'd her brow.

XIX.

Our loves, our loves (Ah! how it bodes!)
Shall Evil's face see first,
Since, for my joe, the first I've spy'd
Is warlock, pilgrim worst.

XX.

And she hath tripp'd, yet trembling much,
To pass him on the *right*,
And speak the *first* word, all his spells
To break, ay, in his spite;

XXI.

* Steep, or rather hillock.

XXI.

For warlocks' spells may broken be
By spells of Christian men.
(Be then not fearful, though ye meet
The ill wight in the glen.)

XXII.

Thrice hail ! thou carle of knowledge deep !
Thrice hail ! command thou me !
Thrice hail ! I crave for boon thy grace !
And on his right stands she.

XXIII.

And happy now she is, I trow,
For spells can do no ill :
When coughing thrice, and breathing fast,
The warlock stays him still.

XXIV.

Then lifting slowly up his neck,

It

(It *dows* * not climb so high
But that his bonnet shades his eyes)
He slowly makes reply :

XXV.

Hail, daughter fair ! (for fair art thou
As e'er won young man's heart !
Mine eyes are veil'd with age, but this
My spells to me impart.)

XXVI.

My boon to thee shall be my grace,
If thy soft arm of youth
Will stay my weary frame of eld,
And if thou wilt tell truth.

XXVII.

Sore quakes the maiden to hear this ;
Yet forer to gainfay :

C

So

* To *dow*, I think, is to be able to find in one's self to do.

So muttering thrice, O Christ shield me !
 She must prepare t'obey.

XXVIII.

When (thrice now cross'd her bosom white,
 And thrice her lovely brow,)
 She sees one arm hide it in glove,
 And one its charms avow.

XXIX.

And wots she not that things *unlike*
 To evil's Lord pertain ? *
 The taper limb (like snow of morn)
 Soon the pleas'd air doth gain.

XXX.

Her *left* hand now she trembling puts
 Beneath the spell-wight's arm ;
 But then, o'er it, the rival right
 Forms *cross* to keep from harm.

XXXI.

* This line stands in the MS. thus,
 Are dower of evil's thane.

XXXI.

And in her shaking heart she says,
Would fragments were with me
Of Christ's dear tomb, or Mary's house,
Borne to best Italy!

XXXII.

Now *sonse** befall thee, daughter true,
 For this true daughter's deed!
 And for thy love I'll give a boon;
 Thy fortune, child, I'll read†.

XXXIII.

This hand shall bless a youth, whose heart
Is love up to the brim.
Six sons, full brave, and daughters six,
Full fair, shalt thou give him.

XXXIV.

* That which is good, fortunate, &c.

† To read the fortune of a lady (for instance) among the Scots, is to foretel it by reading it in magic characters.

XXXIV.

*Your loves shall be the wonder still
Of all the castles round :
So charm'd, each swain shall haste to wed,
Each maid be willing found.*

XXXV.

*And ye shall live (and live aye blest)
Till nought your eyes can spy.
Your sons' sons' sons shall round the couch
Stand weeping, when ye die.*

XXXVI.

*Now tell thy fire, O star-lov'd dame !
(I charg'd thee to be true)
If in this mead lurks Edmar young,
His coat and bonnet blue.*

XXXVII:

*For he hath wrought me mickle ill ;
And hither, at this hour*

Of

Of eve, have crawl'd my rigid limbs,
With all my spells of power.

XXXVIII.

And well can I full mickle ill
Work him, O virgin dame !
For I was born the *seventh* son :
And Glorloz is my name.

XXXIX.

I'm cunning in the lore of stars ;
And me, to aid, have sworn
Their numerous sprights, (whose power fways all),
While prickly grows the thorn.

XL.

And hear : Who works dread Glorloz ill,
Shall not on Venus' eve
Begin his love ; and love begun
Shall but his bosom grieve.

XLI.

His flocks and herds no more shall thrive ;
His health shall thrive no more ;
No more his babes ; but he shall fade
As snow when rills run o'er.

XLII.

And at the hour of fiends, his couch
Shall see still fights of blood ;
And hear still fearful groans and yells ;
And naught shall work him good.

XLIII.

Now tell with truth, O lady fair !
(And telling, be full loud ;
Few sounds now pass mine ears, grown dull
With age, that makes me proud),

XLIV.

If in this meadow hides himself,
False Edmar, as I ween :

For

For fiercely burns my warlock-ire,
And ill shall it be seen.

XLV.

With angry tone the warlock threatens,
While trembles *litb* * and limb
Elwinna ; and the more she thinks,
The peril looks more grim.

XLVI.

I knew, I knew much ill was nigh
Our loves, soon as I spy'd
The ominous wight, a warlock, for
The true knight of my fide !

XLVII.

And pearl-like stands the molten woe
Upon her brow of love :
Yet, from the cros, to wipe, dares not
Her snowy right hand move.

XLVIII.

* Joint.

XLVIII.

Good Christ ! forbid his warlock-spells

To work my Edmar harm !

And king art thou, ev'n warlocks fear !

No spell can stay thine arm !

XLIX.

Low prays she thus ; then sadly wails :

Why wouldst thou do him wrong ?

Why wouldst thou work sweet Edmar ill,

The best that e'er was young ?

L.

How can it be that thou can'st find

Within thy heart, O fire !

To harm a one so goodly good —

O' *ilka* * heart's desire !

LI.

He holds his vassals as his sons :

And to his *lairdly* † hall

Crawls

* Every.

† Lordly.

Crawls in, ay, many a pilgrim bent,
But out come dancing all.

LII.

Then, much he grieves to hunt the hare,
And oft would stay behind ;
And when he hooks the pretty trout,
He fore relents in mind.

LIII.

O how, then, would he e'er work ill
To beard and locks like thine ?—
I tell thee, daughter, he hath wrought
Me mickle ill in mine.

LIV.

For, at the foot of Dirring-hill,
My fon dwells, true though low :
The *bether* * caps his clay-built cot,
Blithe fwain—nay, now not so.

E

LV.

* Heath.

LV.

For, dame, he hath a daughter fair,
And he hath only one,
All fimple, as the bouncing lamb,
And good : but she's undone.

LVI.

Ill Edmar scour'd the heathy hills ;
And, passing near the gate,
He spy'd the ruddy damfel, who
On blue-stone knitting fate.

LVII.

O! but ye are a maid as fair
As e'er look'd for the youth!
And will ye give me milk to drink,
To cool my burning mouth?

LVIII.

He asks in guile ; his mouth burns not :
But he hath an ill aim ;

For

For in his wicked heart he'ath faid,
I'll lie with this sweet dame.

LIX.

And she hath raif'd her from the stone,
 And tripp'd it with good will ;
 And foon the *double-lugged* * *quaigh*†
 With the thick milk doth fill.

LX.

Now, blushing, she hath giv'n the dish ;
 But not to him her eyes,
 Which from her foot unshod, that strokes
 The hether, dare not rise.

LXI.

He drinks, and breathes, and drinks again :
 Such beauty, damsel bright,

Was

* Double-eared.

† A *quaigh* is a round wooden dish with two ears.

Was ne'er made for this cot obscure,
But to give laird's hall light.

LXII.

And fits your fire within the cot?
Or doth your mother spin?
My fire he feeds the far off flocks;
My mother's not within.

LXIII.

For she hath sped her to the fair,
To sell her rural store;
And, fir, I stay to tend the cot,
At home there's no one more.

LXIV.

He's glad, and lights soon from the steed,
Which ties he to the gate;
Then clasps the maid and kisses her,
All blushing and full *blate**.

LXV.

* Bashful.

LXV.

Syne* he hath led her to the couch,
And lustily talks love,
While dreadful things he prays may come,
If ever he false prove.

LXVI.

Full fix moons, now, and one have shin'd,
Ay, since the filly dame
Was maid no more ; but, day by day,
Bedew'd her ruin'd name.

LXVII.

For now she's like a faded flower :
Men fling it to the mire,
Though on its stem it charm'd each eye,
And made each breast aspire.

F

LXVIII.

* Then ; after that.

LXVIII.

The pride of virgin pureness gone !

Gone chastity divine !

Now swains, that erst sued at her feet,

To trample her would join.

LXIX.

And often at the dead of night

She cries along the heath,

Sweet Christ ! give both the babe and me

To the blest cave of death !

LXX.

But ere sleep stretch me, sure shall gripe

The perjur'd wight my spells.—

Now, fire, 'tis not *my* Edmar : no,

But some wrong'd maiden's elfe.

LXXI.

I ken it clearly from thy tale :

O ! how can it be he,

Who

Who hath so often kneel'd and sworn,
He ne'er lov'd one but me?

LXXII.

And now (though much my bosom feels
The weeping maid's sad plight)
If not my Edmar's was the ill,
My Edmar's why the wite*?

LXXIII.

For if another did the wrong,
And mark'd him with the brand,
Could my love, he, prevent the deed?
Or who escapes Falshood's hand?

LXXIV.

Would e'er he make a maiden good
An ill one, and despis'd?

Or

* Blame. The editor thought *wite* Scottish, till he found it in Spenser. That fine old bard has several words which, though now obsolete in England, are still generally used in Scotland.

Or so turn all her joy to woe,
The grave were all she priz'd?

LXXV.

Then, too, our mutual love began
On day, by Venus ow'd*.
And knew'st thou him, he's good and true
As e'er was priest of God.

LXXVI.

O me! he's sweeter than the milk
That reeks yet in the pail!
And softer than the molten pearl
That decks each morn the dale!

LXXVII.

Yet, as our Wallace, brave is he,
And fierce 'gainst each false foe;
Then, gallant as the pilgrim knight,
That frees wrong'd dames from woe.

LXXVIII.

* To *owe* has here the old sense of to possess; to be the owner of;
to own.

LXXVIII.

He's lovelier than maid's tongue can tell,
 Or maid's eye wish to see :
 And he 'ath ne'er lov'd, nor e'er will love,
 O fire ! but only me.

LXXIX.

Now tell me nought, O daughter dear !
 Of all his charms so rare,
 Or of the oaths he 'ath sworn to thee :
 Thy words are words of air.

LXXX.

What's bonnier than the freckled fnake ?
 What's fair as snow to view ?
 What's sweeter than the finging bourn * ?
 What nobler than the yew † ?

G

LXXXI.

* Rill.

† The *yew*, it would seem, has lost its fame since the musket sup-
 planted the bow.

LXXXI.

The first hath many stung to death ;

The second many starv'd ;

The third hath drown'd th' uncautious maid ;

The fourth foul murderers serv'd *.

LXXXII.

O, simple fair ! didst thou think right,

Or know the ways of youth ;

The bonnier is the wanton wight,

The viler is his truth.

LXXXIII.

And what the common oaths of love

From men?—words, to work ill ;

Wiles, to win each his filly maid

(Too waxen) to his will.

LXXXIV.

* It is a common supposition, that the yew contains a deadly poison.

LXXXIV.

For, while their lips found awful words,
Thus says their bosom's drift,
To break love-oath's so venial sin,
We'll tell it not at shrift *.

LXXXV.

As witness (to a grandfire's woe)
The oaths that wrought the shame
And ruin of my pride and hope,
And blow my fury's flame.

LXXXVI.

Yet deem thou not, O precious maid !
I think thy Edmar blithe,
The Edmar that hath rous'd mine ire,
Which soon full ill shall *kythe* †.

LXXXVII.

* Confession.

† Appear.

LXXXVII.

To ken this give me not my spells ;
But list, and learn from me
The Edmar that hath hated mine,
And tell if this loves thee.

LXXXVIII.

Ill Edmar is an only son,
And lives i' th' fair Mers-land.
Wide are his fields, nor few ; the flocks
Many that wear his *brand* *.

LXXXIX.

Brown are the locks that shade his back ;
And peat-brown are his eyes.
He loves a maid—on fairer, no,
The sun did never rise.

XC.

* Distinctive mark put on sheep.

XC.

Her name—the one is music, he
 Sings coming from the chace!—
 Gay smiles fit thronging in her look
 As in their chosen place.

XCI.

And flax-fair are the tresses long
 That seek her bosom white.
 Her voice, none sweeter charms the Spring:
 Her eyes—what blue so bright?

XCII.

Dame, thou hast seen the azure veil
 Round Cheviot's brow of snow,
 Weav'd by the sun in ether's loom,
 More bright their blue, I trow.

XCIII.

When fond proud youngling Smiles would try
 Her lovely mouth * to ope,

H

To

* *Her lovely mouth*; in the MS. Her mouth's blest bower.

To show two flocks of snow-white twins.
(And temperance gives them hope.)

XCIV.

In mould how fair Heav'n cast her form !
Nor had ill Art the foul,
With fingers rude, to dare to spoil,
Or Heaven's own aim controul.

XCV.

If fair her form, as fair her mind,
Ay, fairer, hold me true :
She's constant as the cooing dove,
She's full as galleys, too.

XCVI.

Now, she an only daughter is ;
And her white flocks are seen
By those of the false Edmar, wot :
One rill runs down between.

XCVII.

On Venus' eve, along the mead,
With bow unbent, came he ;

Nor

Nor thought of love, but on his hounds,
Or making *forayers** flee.

XCVIII.

So Edmar came,—when on his eyes,
From out a hazle-bower,
Tripp'd forth the maid, how bright ! He stood—
What fill'd his soul that hour !

XCIX.

What heed I feud ! what, family-rage ?
Th' eternal pact shall make
A lady of such beauty mine !
Life's worth but for her sake !

C.

He 'xclaim'd : then, keeling, told his love.
She blush'd ; and to him said,
If ye love me, O, I love you.
And that blest eve was made

CI.

* Robbers on the borders, so named from *foray*, which signifies a plundering incursion ; and is probably a provincial corruption of *forage*.

CI.

The mutual vow, to love till death :
And oft hath Edmar chide
Slow Time, that will not haste and give
His arms so fair a bride.

CII.

And one day late the fire of each
Laid in the cell of death,
While their aye-jarring feud through life,
With them gave up its breath,

CIII.

To be inhumed in the couch
Of their join'd houses' heirs.
And lift ! this eve (my spells show me)
This meadow Edmar bears,

CIV.

Come to hear wrong'd Elwinna's love,
Told in love's own pure style.—
And is my Edmar false to me ?
And is my Edmar vile ?

CV.

CV. .

The cros disjoints ; and she had fall'n
Straight down upon the mead,
But that with care the gray carl's arms
Stay her in time of need.

CVI.

Oh ! from this hour forth, never more
Will I go through my gate !
Farewell for aye mine ancient hall !
And maids that on me wait !

CVII.

For I will hie me to the dame
Whose wrongs lone Dirring hears ;
And as we have been like in woes,
We shall be like in tears.

CVIII.

We'll weep within the cot by day,
And wet the heath by night ;

I

Till

Till Death shall stretch us in one tomb,
And make our wrongs all right.—

CIX.

Now speak not thus, my daughter lov'd ;
Why tak'st thou evil so ?
O ! trust my years, knows its own pains
The *lairdliest** blifs below.

CX.

And what boots whining grief ? nay, it
Alone makes suffering fore.
The milk once spilt upon the pool
Can ne'er be gathered more ;

CXI.

The stone once tumbled from the hill
Can ne'er climb up again :
Then for why deeds can ne'er b' undone
Should she that's wife complain ?

CXII.

* Lordliest.

CXII.

In footh that is the why I wail ;
For O ! could deeds b' undone,
Hope would shine through my darksome breast,
As through dark clouds the sun.

CXIII.

But deeds, once done, are done for aye ;
So aye must be my woe :
And grief, not comfort, give thy words.—
To Dirring-hill I'll go.

CXIV.

But loose thou first my leathern zone,
(Unlock the buckle band),
And ease me of my coat of gray,
That lightened I may stand,

CXV.

To go to seek ill Edmar out,
And sorrow on him lay,

Worfe

Worse sorrow than he 'ath laid on thee.—
fire not so, I pray !

CXVI.

I pardon all he'ath laid on me ;
Nor e'er can with him pain :
And too thy son's wrong'd child will join
His safety to obtain.

CXVII.

True he hath done much wrong to her ;
So hath he done to me.—
Pluck off my gray, thou matchless maid,
And good shall come to thee.

CXVIII.

Now, she doth tremble limb and lith
To give an aiding hand
To warlock bent to harm her joe,
Yet dare she not withstand.

CXIX.

CXIX.

And she hath loos'd the leathern zone;
And fyne the coat of gray
She hath ta'en by the right-hand sleeve,
The carle to difarray,

CXX.

And now the bonnet black (with locks
Of age) is toff'd behind;
While chefnut locks, no stunted length,
Fall curling in the wind.

CXXI.

Then from a soft unwrinkled chin
The beard, so snowy seen,
Descends, and shows by Nature's hand
It had not planted been.

CXXII.

And who now stands before her gaze
But Edmar, or a shade

Of Edmar, rais'd by spells ! Those eyes ?
Now fairs entreat for aid !

CXXIII.

The warlock hath put on the form
Of Edmar to work ill !
O ! break his spells, great God of Heav'n !
Nor let him win my will !

CXXIV.

But soon the youth the trembling maid
Holds in his happy arms !
And pressing thrice her filken cheek,
I'll guard thee from all harms !

CXXV.

No warlock's spells have stol'n my form,
But I am Rofvil's fon.
O ! free me from my falsehood feign'd,
And pardon what I've done.

CXXVI.

CXXVI.

O me! 'tis my own Edmar's voice!
My Edmar's voice again!
Ay, 'tis the Edmar's whose true heart
Shall ne'er cause thine to plain.—

CXXVII.

And the ill Edmar I told of
Is not thy Edmar, here,
But hard-foul'd Edmar of the hill,
Who ne'er could shed a tear.

CXXVIII.

Could e'er I wrong sweet woman so
As make sweet woman weep!
Could e'er I purchase transient bliss
With her long woe and deep!

CXXIX.

Could e'er I love, Elwinna, tell,
Another maid than thee!
E'er seek to win another heart,
When thine was kept for me!

CXXX.

CXXX.

I cloth'd me as a warlock-wight
 To hear thy matchless love.—
 Thou'rt fairer than all maids below !
 Thou'rt good as all above !

CXXXI.

Now told I not, it was not you ?
 For will I knew you true.
 And ye will ne'er love none but me * ;
 And I'll love none but you.

CXXXII.

So HYMEN tied th' eternal knot,
 (It was on Venus' day):
 And long they liv'd, and aye lov'd well ;
 And they were happy aye.

* Two negatives were very often used, by our fathers, to strengthen each other.



T H E E N D.

